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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
515 N. LADD STREET
PONTIAC, IL 61764



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Growing the Family of God

Telling the Story

Serving the Community

Nurturing Believers

Coffee with Jim



By now you have become accustomed to seeing the phrase Growing the Family of God on virtually every printed document the church produces as well as bumper stickers and window clings. We take this phrase seriously and its sub-points:

Telling the Story;
Nurturing Believers;
Serving the Community.

To grow the family of God requires intentionality on the part of the pastors and the congregation. Recently your pastors sat down for a frank discussion of goals and priorities for the coming year.

Pastor Jay and I would like to share some of our goals with you. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an amalgam of our thoughts.

- Continue to build the junior and senior high program to 15 youth by the end of the year 2019
- Build a small group for the young adults
- Build a music team for praise and worship (including small groups and ensembles).
- In addition to the outdoor service add at least one additional community event sponsored by FBC.
- Engage 50% of congregation in church wide campaign and small group ministry
- Increase United Mission by 2%
- Increase social media presence e.g. post blog on Facebook, worship videos, devotions, etc.
- Upgrade sound and video technology
- Increase participation in Sunday Morning Connections and Worship by 5%

Setting goals is important to the growth and development of persons and organizations. The church, however, is not merely an organization. The church is defined by Paul as the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). If the church is the body of Christ, then we need to change the language from goal setting to vision-casting.

This change in terminology is more than semantics. It represents an understanding of the church as being under the lordship of Jesus Christ, and as such called to be the hands and feet of Christ

Jim's Coffee Corner (cont.)

in a fallen world. Therefore, we seek, not merely to set goals, but discern, articulate, and live into God's vision and purpose for ministry.

George Barna, founder of The Barna Group, a market research firm specializing in studying the religious beliefs and behavior of Americans, defines vision as "a clear mental portrait of a preferable future, communicated by God to His chosen servant-leaders, based upon an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstances".

(The Vision Thing by George Barna <https://static1.squarespace.com>)

Vision is a clear mental portrait of the future. Vision is from God. The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk was instructed to "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay" (Habakkuk 2:2-3).

Thus, your pastors have attempted to discern God's vision of the future that God has planned for us. We have taken seriously the admonition of the prophet to "write the vision." What we cannot accomplish alone is to fulfill the vision. To complete the vision requires the time, commitment, vision, gifts and resources of each one of us to Grow the Family of God.

In the discernment process we have taken seriously the church's commitment to tell the story. We tell the story in very practical ways e.g. building small groups for youth and young adults. Increasing our giving to United Missions tells the story of Christ's love by reaching far beyond the walls of our church and working with ABCUSA, Home Missions and International Ministries to share the message of God's love and justice.

As we increase our social media presence, we strengthen our voice in the community and the wider world of internet communications. Each one of us can engage in social media. It is not necessary to have a personal Facebook account. If you feel that you have something important to share with the wider family send your pictures, videos, or stories to our church's administrative assistant. (Rhonda@fbcpontiac.org). It may not seem important to those of us who are of the baby boomer generation, but social media is the tool of the next generation whom we desperately want to reach with the message of God's love.

There is an important caveat to the use of social media. Ask permission before you post pictures or video, even a prayer request. Social media can be used as a powerful outreach tool. However, it may also be misused causing pain and anger. ASK first. One further thought, political rhetoric does not have a place on the church's Facebook page.

Upgrading the quality of sound and adding video is part of our vision for telling the story. We no longer have a radio presence, but social media and current technology make it possible for us

Thank You

We would like to thank those in our church family for all of your support for us after our surgeries in November and December. For your prayers, visits, prepared meals, and thoughts, your blessings are deeply felt. Thank you all once again.

Dale and Teri Newsome

Dear Church Family,

I wanted to share with you that I was anonymously blessed in our church. I immediately thanked God. Since I don't know who the anonymous person is, God does and I thanked Him for using you. (Philippians 1:3 - "I thank God every time I remember you")

Sincerely and gratefully,

Juanita James

ONU Proclamation Gospel Choir

We're excited to welcome the ONU Gospel Choir for a special performance on Sunday, February 3rd at 4:00 pm.

The Proclamation Gospel Choir is a 60-voice ensemble who perform traditional and contemporary gospel music, accompanied by a rhythm ensemble. The ensemble performs under the direction of Dr. Marvin Jones.



Men's Night Out

It's time for another night of food, fun, and fellowship with the next Men's Night Out. All men are invited to meet at the church at 6:00 pm on Thursday, February 21st. The destination is to be determined but laughter and good company are guaranteed!

Newsletter Deadline

All articles for inclusion the March edition of our church newsletter must be submitted to the church office no later than Monday, February 18th. You may submit your articles by phone (842.4321), fax (844.6943), by e-mail (Rhonda@fbcpontiac.org) or by leaving them in the black box outside the church office door.



**Prayer Chain
Number
815.419.4454**

If you wish to receive prayer chain calls, please contact the church office at 815.842.4321 and request that your name and number be added to the list.

New Ideas - Mother & Daughter Tea

Looking forward at our calendar, Brenda Dodd, member at large for Adult Ministries, would like to plan a quilt themed Mother and Daughter Tea in May. If you are interested in helping to plan this gathering or have an idea you'd like to share, there will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex.

The War Room - A Lenten Study on Prayer

Our 2019 Lenten church wide campaign will be a study on prayer based on the movie, The War Room. We will present the movie to the church family on Sunday, March 3rd at 4:00 pm with small groups starting the week of March 10th.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for this church-wide event and watch upcoming bulletins and announcements for your opportunity to join a small group for this amazing study on prayer!



Your gifts to the America For Christ offering impact thousands through ministries with marginalized children, mission trips that transform lives, resources that cultivate Christian leaders, and so much more.

We will receive the America For Christ offering at the close of worship on Sunday, February 24th.

Winter Weather Reminder



A reminder as we make our way through a season of unpredictable winter weather, if Pontiac schools are closed or close early due to inclement weather, all church activities scheduled for that day will also be cancelled. To the best of our ability, church cancellation notices will be broadcast on television stations WEEK and WCIA, and posted on our Facebook page. We encourage everyone to use their best judgment and be safe during hazardous weather!

Jim's Coffee Corner (cont.)

to have a video presence on the web. This upgrade, as well as the security concerns many of you have voiced, are easily accomplished when we choose to make the financial resources available.

Nurturing believers occurs as we engage in church-wide campaigns which bring us together for a time of study and worship on a specific theme. This year's campaign will be a study on prayer, based on the movie The War Room. We will present the movie to the church family on Sunday March 3, with small groups beginning the week of March 10th.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the small groups that emerge from such an activity. Envision with us the power of the Holy Spirit if 50% of us would commit to the church-wide campaign and a small group. We would immediately increase worship and Sunday Morning Connections participation by 5%. The power of that experience would transform this church and bring revival like we have never seen.

Music ministry has the power to be transformational and as ensembles are organized, they become small groups of fellowship and prayer. Music is foundational to Christian worship (see Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16). Don't wait to be asked to join a small group. Find some like-minded folks who love music and step up and ask to be included. There are no cliques here. You are welcome!

The risen Lord declared, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This is a call to serve the community. Each year we offer the outdoor service (September 15, 2019). In addition to that we provide the food pantry, grief support, ABK, Daily Vacation Bible School, small groups and more. Let's envision together what activities we can offer to the community that not only serves to supply a need but welcomes folks into the community of faith.

It must be clearly stated that church growth is a choice. We can choose to accept the power of the Holy Spirit to transform our lives and ministries or we can choose to let

Jim

Small Group Schedule Change

The women's small group study "In the Middle of the Mess" will not begin meeting until after Easter. We apologize for any inconvenience this change in schedule may cause and encourage you to watch upcoming bulletins and newsletters for information regarding the rescheduling of this small group opportunity!



February

- 1 Michael Poshard
- 2 Mason Christianson
- 2 Jan Jolynn Staley
- 2 John and Michelle Bohm ♥
- 3 Trinity Miller
- 3 Neisha Hibbs
- 4 Tyler Lind
- 4 Gary Brill
- 6 Bill Battice
- 9 Aiden Hurd
- 9 Barbara Sancken
- 10 Patty Gray
- 10 Leon Gray
- 10 Peggie Boldt
- 11 Caiti Henson
- 12 Maxine Zytniowski
- 13 Claire Nyi
- 13 Joanne Perkins
- 13 Margaret Turner ♥
- 14 Barry and Barbara Highland
- 15 Cheyle Herman
- 17 Lisa Hurd
- 19 Calvin Krueger
- 19 Dean and Kay Sidfrids ♥
- 20 Karen Gilmoure
- 20 Alana Christianson
- 20 John Bohm
- 22 Marcia Harder
- 27 Bob and Sharon Matteson
- 28 Skip and Carol Jones ♥

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Groundhog Day 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
3 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 4:00 pm ONU Gospel Choir	4 7:00 pm Revelation Small Group	5	6 9:00 am ROMEO Club 9:00 am Ruth Circle 1:00 pm Esther Circle 5:30 pm ABY 6:00 pm ABK	7 6:30 pm Principles Sm. Group	8	9 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
10 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship	11 7:00 pm Revelation Small Group	12	13 9:00 am ROMEO Club 5:30 pm ABY 6:00 pm ABK	14 Valentine's Day 6:30 pm Principles Sm. Group 7:00 pm Board of Ministries	15	16 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
17 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 6:00 pm Struggles to Strength Sm. Group	18 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 pm Revelation Small Group 	19	20 9:00 am ROMEO Club 10:30 am Grief Support Group 5:30 pm ABY 6:00 pm ABK	21 6:30 pm Principles Sm. Group	22	23 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
24 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 6:00 pm Struggles to Strength Sm. Group	25 7:00 pm Revelation Small Group	26	27 9:00 am ROMEO Club 5:30 pm ABY 6:00 pm ABK	28 6:30 pm Principles Sm. Group		